

Staying calm and in control

Calming your mind and body is a great way to cope with illness, pain or stress. But how do you do it? One way is through Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, or MBSR. Studies show that MBSR can help people deal with diabetes, chronic pain, heart disease, and other health problems.

Pause and look around

MBSR teaches “mindfulness.” That means focusing only on things happening in the present moment. You might sit quietly, for example, and notice your emotions. Or you might focus on the look of the sky. When you are mindful, you do just one thing—and focus only on it.

Don't judge the present moment

That's because judgments may lead you to dwell on (or “get stuck” thinking about) bad things, feelings, or thoughts. And dwelling on the past does not help you accept or solve problems. It just brings you down.

No regrets

Training your mind to focus only on the present helps you forget about the past and the future. You may also learn to let go of negative thoughts, and accept things as they are. That way you are in control of your mind, rather than it being in control of you.



MINDFULNESS
helps you be aware of
your surroundings, your
emotions, your thoughts,
and how your body feels

See other side for ways to
relax and focus using MBSR

Focusing on the present with MBSR



Here are some ways to focus your mind using MBSR. If these tips don't work for you, you might want to think of others that will. You are in control of your thoughts!



When you go outside, **take a few deep breaths**. What's the air like? Is it warm or cold? How does the air feel on your body? Try to accept that feeling and not resist it.

Eat a meal in silence. Don't do anything but focus on your food. Smell your food before eating it. Eat slowly, and savor each bite.

When you can, take some time at the start of your day to **sit alone and think**. Focus on your breathing. Gaze out the window, and listen to the sounds outdoors.

At work, try to **stop for a few moments each hour**. Note how your body feels. Let yourself regroup and let your mind settle before you return to what you were doing.

If you struggle with anxiety, think of your mind as a blue sky and your worry as clouds. Now imagine those clouds floating across your mind's sky. Let them pass as you watch.



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